

Harold's story

Learn how veteran, Harold, is getting care that meets his needs so he can live safely and happily in residential aged care.

Harold is 101 and a World War II veteran. He lives in a residential aged care home that honours his service and provides specialised services for veterans and war widows.

Read Harold's story or [listen to](#) his video story.



Harold served in the Royal Australian Navy during World War II from August 1942 until July 1946. Harold now lives in a Vasey RSL Care Residential Aged Care Home in Melbourne. He enjoys reading, catching up with friends and barracking for his AFL team, the Richmond Tigers.

Harold first found out about, and accessed, aged care support through the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

Finding out about aged care

While living at home, Harold was receiving aged care services from DVA. He had a specialty armchair made for his measurements which helped him to more easily sit and stand up from the chair. He was also fitted with an insulin monitor in his arm. This was a relief to Harold as he didn't have to prick his finger each day to monitor his blood sugar levels.

In 2021, Harold had a fall and broke his hip. His children cared for him after his hospital stay.

When his daughter needed some respite care, they decided to look at options in a residential aged care home.

'Before I came in here, we came to have a look around and my doctor happened to walk past. So, the next time I went to see him, I said, "What do you think about (the aged care home), would it be a good place to go to?" He said, "Harold, you couldn't go to a better place", so my mind was made up on that. If he said it's ok, it must be ok, and it was ok.'

He was able to get short-term respite care at the RSL aged care home.

Some old Navy friends, and widows of old Navy friends, were living in the same home. Harold enjoyed being able to rekindle old friendships with them, as well as make new friendships with other veterans and war widows.

After just 2 weeks, Harold—with support from his family—decided he would live there permanently due to the high level of care and quality of life.

Aged care that works for him

Harold uses a wheelchair due to his limited mobility. The staff help Harold to get in and out of his wheelchair, armchair and bed, and assist him to move around the home. They also help him with everyday things like his medications.

Harold appreciates the care he receives from the staff and says they're all friendly and happy to help him. Harold also feels comfortable knowing that 2 Registered Nurses (RNs) are on shift in the home every day and night.



'They have 2 RNs on duty all through the night, 24 hours a day. So that's pretty good. The staff, by and large, know what they're doing and they're familiar with me of course, so it's good.'

Harold enjoys the sense of community and social opportunities that come with living in the aged care home. He enjoys the meals and particularly looks forward to having fish and chips for lunch every Friday with an old friend, and plenty of new friends, who live in the same home.

He also enjoys attending weekly choir sessions with other residents.

'The staff are all really nice. And you get to do things like go to your choir. They take me out to choir and bring me back again.'

Harold's identity as a sailor and veteran is important to him and the staff make sure to recognise this. Each year, the residents in Harold's home observe ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day. Harold is proud to say that he is asked to recite the Sailor's Ode at each commemoration.

Like Harold, veterans and war widows can access specialised aged care support from providers who have been verified against the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's Specialisation Verification Framework.

For more information visit [MyAgedCare.gov.au/Support-Veterans](https://myagedcare.gov.au/support-veterans) or free call **1800 200 422**.

You can also contact the Department of Veterans' Affairs at [DVA.gov.au/Get-Support/Health-Support/Care-Home-Or-Aged-Care](https://dva.gov.au/get-support/health-support/care-home-or-aged-care) or free call **1800 838 372**.